

Another Great Story commenced this week, by Oll Coomes, who writes exclusively for the Saturday Journal.

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STAR

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No. 147.



His eyes fell upon something that started from out the gloom toward him--something that sent the blood in icy currents through his veins.

OLD SOLITARY, THE HERMIT TRAPPER; OR, THE DRAGON OF SILVER LAKE.

BY OLL COOMES,

Author of "Hawkeye Harry," "Boy Spy," "Iron-sides, the Scout," "Death-Noteh, the Destroyer," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

A NIGHT OF ADVENTURE.

It was a wintry day in the year 1846. The brow of the heavens was moody and sullen.

Great volumes of dark, gray clouds lay piled in jumbled masses against the northern sky, and from these, fleecy shreds detached themselves and went trooping across the heavens, trailing their tattered and torn fragments in wild confusion through the air. A damp, chilly wind swept across the plain, and rushed threateningly through the brown valleys and forest aisles, moaning bitter stories of a coming storm to the wild-wood monarchs that stood writhing and shivering in its breath.

Beneath that continent of clouds, the great prairie of the north-west lay, apparently tenantless in its murky gloom, its hills and valleys, its meandering streams and leafless mottes of timber, fading away into one dissolving view--that mysterious ocean of darkness--the boundary of the vision.

A broad waste of undulating prairie, stretching its unbroken length between the English river and Silver Lake, in the then territory of Iowa, lay in all the fullness of

its autumnal grandeur and desolation, ready to receive the winter's offering that was gathering in the clouds above. It was a plain, whose continuation of gentle swells, or prairie waves, was unbroken inside of weary leagues, traveling westward from the English river.

But, despite the solitude and the threatening character of the approaching storm, life was abroad on that plain. Hoofed feet were pressing its soil and going in a westward course in obedience to the guiding hand of a master.

It was a solitary horseman who was making his way across that plain, in the face of the gathering snow-storm. He was well bundled from the biting winds, in a wolf-skin coat, buffalo over-shoes and a fur cap. The latter was drawn down over his ears, meeting almost with the upturned collar of his great-coat, and nearly concealing his face. A red woolen scarf encircled his neck, and its ends crossing on his breast, passed under the arms and were tied behind his back.

The animal he bestrode showed signs of exhaustion from long travel and the burden it bore. For, in addition to its rider, there were several large packs strapped to the

saddle behind, while each side of the front bow was loaded to its utmost capacity.

Whither this solitary man was journeying was mystery to all but himself, for the country to the westward, as far as the Missouri river, was the undisputed hunting-ground of the various tribes of Indians that dwelt to the northward, and who regarded the pale-face intruders with hostile jealousy. His presence there might have been a strong argument in favor of his being in league with the Indians, had it not been for one thing, of which the stranger was evidently unconscious.

Far back upon his trail, and yet within sight of him, an Indian warrior was dogging his footsteps. He was on foot, yet he managed to maintain the same distance between the horseman and himself that he had gained hours before.

But not conscious of the spy upon his track, the rider pursued his lonely course, occasionally consulting a small pocket compass to direct his bearings.

Now and then he scanned the clouded sky. He saw the dark gray clouds trooping across the heavens, and with an eager impatience he would apply the whip and rod to his jaded beast, as if anxious to reach

some point of safety and shelter before the storm came on.

As he rode on, he at length noticed that it was growing darker and darker around him, and unpleasant apprehensions filled his mind. Night was near, yet he was far from the least cover that could afford him shelter.

He certainly had underestimated the distance required to complete that day's journey to reach the timber that bordered the western extremity of the plain.

A sense of fear was stealing over him. He was fully satisfied that the night would be one of extreme darkness; and what, with a blinding snow-storm beating around him, could he do upon that prairie?

He pressed on with all the speed that his jaded animal could muster. There was still a faint hope in his breast that he might run across a motte of timber, one of those oases that interperse these great prairie stretches.

As he journeyed on, he suddenly found these hopes realized to a certain degree, when he found himself in the midst of a sparse growth of burr-oak "grubs," as they are termed in western phraseology. These are small bushes, most of which were not over five feet high, and numbering about

one to every square rod of ground. In the gathering twilight they presented a dense form, so thick and close were the stunted and stubby boughs upon them. Yet this sparse growth of "timber" held forth no inviting inducements as a point of shelter. At first he entertained a belief that it was the outskirts of a dense body of timber, but he found on riding on a ways that it soon terminated in the open prairie again. So, riding back among the burr-oaks, he dismounted with the determination of going into camp, for upon examination he had found that many of the oaks were dead--having been killed by the annual fires that sweep the prairies--and being perfectly dry, would answer the purpose of fuel.

Stripping his animal, he tethered it with a lariat, so that it could crop the grass, which, though dry and brown, was readily eaten by the hungry, jaded beast.

From one of his bundles the traveler now took a roll of canvas, with which he proceeded to erect a tent. This he did in a speedy and novel manner: with a hatchet he trimmed all the branches from one of the oaks, leaving nothing but the body standing. This was to be used as the central pole, and having fastened the canvas around it at the proper distance from the ground, he stretched it out at the lower sides until it resembled a small cone, and fastened its edges down with slender iron pins, driven into the ground. A small opening in one side served as the door, which was covered with a loose "flap" when closed for the night.

His tent completed, the traveler placed all his effects within it, then gathered from the surrounding bushes a goodly quantity of fuel, which he also deposited in his tent.

Before striking a fire, he reconnoitered his situation, for he could not convince himself that he was entirely free from danger. He found that the wind had suddenly changed from the north-west to the north-east--a freak very common in this high latitude--and now it brought to his ears a sound like the dashing of breakers upon a rocky shore. But the sound was very faint and was driven from his thoughts by a grand spectacle that was revealed before him.

A white curtain seemed to extend from amid the clouds to the earth, resembling a mighty sail crowded to its utmost, at times bellingy almost to the earth.

It required but a single glance to tell the traveler that it was a blinding cloud of snow sweeping across the plain. He could already feel the fine particles upon his hands and face, and he had barely time to enter his tent and fasten down the door-flap when the sharp click of the snow-flakes upon the canvas told that the storm was upon him.

He glanced out through a small rent to see how his horse was taking the driving storm, but the air was so densely filled with the flying sand as to render it totally impossible to distinguish an object a rod away.

Turning about, he proceeded to strike a fire. He arranged some of the fuel, already procured, in the center of the lodge. Then he took from an inner pocket a match, which he struck and applied to the pile.

A dull, blue light pervaded the gloom of the place, but, as the flames gathered strength, they shot their bright, ruddy rays into every corner of the lodge, and their warm, cheerful glow was felt in every fiber of the wanderer's frame. He removed his scarf, cap and great-coat, and laid them aside. His form and features were now more fully revealed in the ruddy glow of the fire.

He was a man not over eight and twenty years of age, and his features wore that bright, intelligent expression so characteristic of mental and social culture. His hair and beard were almost black, the latter, however, being of but a few weeks' growth. His eyes were black, sharp and brilliant, but their lids wore a heavy, languid expression that was not natural, but was rather the result of fatigue, watching, and the want of sleep.

And now, as the stranger sat gazing reflectively into the cheerful fire before him, he would fall into a daze from which he would start at every wail of the wind without, and stare about him with that wild, terrified look that marks the fear of one who can hear in every noise, however slight, the subdued voice of a detective, the click of a revolver, or the stealthy clasp of handcuffs.

But surely that handsome stranger had no such fears. He surely was not a fugitive from the officers of justice, for his was not the face of a criminal. But why did he start, and manifest such restlessness of spirit and uneasiness of mind?

As the moments wore on, he finally shook off his emotions of fear and uneasiness, and drawing from among his effects a pair of saddle-bags, he took therefrom some provisions, with which he proceeded to feast his gnawing hunger.

After his repast had been concluded, he produced a pipe, and for the next hour gave himself up entirely to its companion-slip.

And all this time the snow was falling. He could hear its continuous click upon the sides of his tent, and in several places it was drifting into the lodge under the edge of the canvas.

CHAPTER II.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD.

NIGHT had long since set in, and the

Out of the black darkness overhead white, ghostly forms leaned down, which were nothing but stalactites, and out of the darkness around a troop of pale statues seemed flitting, under the flickering light of the fire.

But around the altar itself was the most gaudily assembly of all.

Standing erect, leaning against white stalactites, and apparently as fresh as if just killed, a row of human bodies, *all headless*, met the view, dressed in the costume of Indian warriors. On the ground before each of them lay the head which had belonged to it in life, plumed and painted as if on the war-path, and the weapons of each, all firearms, lay beside the heads.

The Rock Rider stepped into the circle, and drove the butt of the spear into a crevice of the rock, while the head remained grinning aloft, when the strange being addressed the motionless circle.

He leaned the round shield against the altar, where the pale face remained staring up at him, and spoke in his deep, powerful voice:

"Warriors and chiefs, once owners of this broad continent, I bring a fresh guest for your circle to-night. The black buzzard of the prairie flew to the mountain to-day and hovered above my head, and I knew from the voice of the wind that death was coming to the Sierra. Chiefs and warriors, ye know how the Rock Rider has hated blood, and how often he has been compelled to shed it. Tell me only where my little one has gone, and the red-man shall roam free of the Rock Rider's spear. Refuse, and I must e'en go on with my task, till the last chief of your tribes has fallen to avenge the death of my beloved one."

Then the wild being took up the shield and held it aloft, so that the face was slowly turned around the circle.

"Look at them, beloved," said the Rock Rider, in a strange tone of joy. "If vengeance belonged to man, have I not avenged thee? See the form of the Coiling Snake, the same that struck thee, my own. I met him in fair fight, with the lance of a true knight against the stolen rifle of the pale-face, and he went down. I remembered thee, and offered him life, if he would tell me where he had hidden our little one. But the red liar said that he knew not, and I slew him. One by one they have fallen, Comanche, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and the tiger of the South, the cruel Apache. See where they stand, awaiting the resurrection. I slew them like men, and they died like wolves. And now I bring them the worst of all, Black Wolf."

He laid down his shield as he spoke, and detached the head of the slain warrior from the spear-point.

He held it up and addressed the silent circle once more.

"Chiefs and warriors, behold Black Wolf, the Comanche chief. He was a coward and a murderer of women. Not many moons ago he led a party to swoop down on a peaceful cottage. He brained the child in its cradle, and slew the mother, when the father was away. Like the wolf he ravened. Like the wolf he died, impaled. His body lies in the pass, to fatten the buzzard and the crow. His fit company for wicked chiefs and warriors, and he repents. Let him lie there till the trumpet sounds."

He laid the head down in the center of the circle, and then turned to Cato, saying:

"Old servant and friend, we have finished for to-night, and the Rock Rider must away again. Death is around us, for the night-hawk screams in the valley. Cato, the time is coming when we shall find her, for I saw her in my dreams twice last night. God knows I would not stay more if I could, but they would not heed my command. The red wolves are in the valley to destroy the white strangers, and I must save them. 'Tis no sin to take life to save a better life. Come."

He took up the shield and lance as he spoke, and stalked from the cavern into the outer one.

Cato had been kneeling there, shivering,

all the while, his lips moving, as if he was praying for safety, his eyes fixed on vacancy. The negro was fairly benumbed with superstitious terror.

As the Rock Rider turned to depart, the poor darkey uttered a deep groan of relief, which was distinctly echoed from the back of the cavern. Cato's wool bristled up on his head. He leaped to his feet, cast a single terrified glance round him, and rushed from the inner cavern to where his master was standing, watching the gaunt mule which was not the present danger of discovery.

As good luck would have it, no harm came to them in consequence. Their abode was perfectly sheltered, and the Indians had entered the valley in the dark, so that there was no present danger of discovery.

The first peep of dawn awoke both, and they instinctively started up, full of apprehension, only to find themselves engulfed in a white sea of mist. Not a sound was to be heard where they were, except the occasional snort of a horse under the tree.

"I say, Jack," quoth Buford, presently, "why shouldn't we set out as well as those two other fellows? I don't believe those Indians amount to much, after all said."

"I'm game," responded the Kentuckian (Somers was a "Blue Grass" man), "if you are. I was just thinking that it wouldn't do to let these two foreigners do all the work, and come home to blow about it. I'm good for twenty-four Indians, if they don't pop me over before I get through with the sword. The other Comanches were coming rapidly up, when Buford suddenly pressed his horse close to that of the Indian chief.

Red Lightning made an effort to cut him down, but the raising of his arm proved his ruin. As the chief's blade went up, Buford delivered a fierce blow (in *fevers' phrase*) right at the Indian, and Red Lightning threw up his arms, and fell back off his horse. Then Somers saw no more, but with a vengeance wild, the Comanches bore down on Buford, and the Kentuckian put spurs to his horse, and galloped down to aid his cousin against the fearful odds that surrounded him in the glade.

"I shall not get shot at twenty yards," said the Virginian, quietly. "I've seen your fellows turn tail before ours in a charge, not because ours were braver, but because we had drawn sabers, and your pistols were empty."

And the Virginian tapped his saber as he spoke. It was his pet weapon, and he was the only one in the party who carried it, simply because he was a first-class swordsman and rider.

Somers grinned. It was an old matter of argument between him and his cousin.

"You can keep your old saber," he said. "What'll you do with it if you get shot down at twenty yards?"

"I shall not get shot at twenty yards," said the Virginian, quietly. "I've tried the experiment before this, and I've seen your fellows turn tail before ours in a charge, not because ours were braver, but because we had drawn sabers, and your pistols were empty."

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"You may, perhaps, Jack," he said; "but Indians are poor shots at best. Come, don't let's blow our own trumpets. I believe in the pistol, inside of six feet, it will do so, and urges its growth."

CHAPTER VIII.

YAKOP.

We must return to Carl Brinkerhoff, who left the tree of rendezvous on perhaps the most laudable errand of the three parties.

The cautious and phlegmatic German was also the best suited of the three to the position in which he found himself, for he was a magnificent shot, with nerves like iron.

He walked quietly away toward a part of the valley where there was plenty of cover, and secured himself a way of retreat to the mountains before he did any thing else. Then he seated himself at the foot of a tree, drew from his pocket a small whistle, and sounded three short notes upon it.

That done, he leaned back against the trunk of the tree, and waited patiently.

He had not so very long to wait. Before ten minutes were up, there was an eager bustle through the grass; and Yakop, panting as from a long run, came up to his master and licked his hand.

"Yakop," he began, "haf you seen de Injuns, mein hand?"

"Wuff," answered Yakop.

"Vos dere dresing, (thirty) Yakop?"

"Ah ha!" Yakop shook his head and growled.

"Ah ha!" Yakop. "Now, mein teiver hand, s'pose you show me vere dey is. You knows de vay, I's pose; hey, Yakop?"

"Wuff," said Yakop, joyfully, and the two set forth together toward the Indian camp, where they arrived just about the same time that Gustave Belcourt tried his ventriloquial tricks.

Brinkerhoff witnessed the arrival of Red Fighting from his scout, and noted the consternation caused by the mysterious voice in the branches of the tree. He sat by, laughing heartily and silently, as he saw the Indians firing up into the branches, and climbing up to search the tree; for, unlike them, he could see Belcourt stealing off.

But he noticed that the Indians did not remain dopes of the tree trick long, for, after a short search, they came down and rushed for their horses, feeding in a hollow beyond. Carl, lying down on the side of an adjacent knoll, saw them ride slowly away toward the east, as the first flush of dawn tipped the peaks of the Sierra.

Then the sweeping white mist began to rise, thicker and thicker, and every thing was shut out from his view.

But where the eye of man was at fault, the scent of the dog proved a guide. Preceded by Yakop, Brinkerhoff set out to gorge his way back toward the lonely tree of rendezvous, rifle in hand, ready for action.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COUSINS.

AFTER the departure of Gustave Belcourt and Carl Brinkerhoff from the tree of rendezvous, Somers and Buford remained for some time near each other, conversing in whispers, and watching intently. But the sleepy influences of the night, and the apparent absence of all danger, speedily overcame their endeavors to keep awake.

First one, then the other, began to nod, and finally both of them fell back on the grass, and snored peacefully, in blissful unconsciousness of danger.

As good luck would have it, no harm came to them in consequence. Their abode was perfectly sheltered, and the Indians had entered the valley in the dark, so that there was no present danger of discovery.

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A HOLIDAY STORY
By Capt. Mayne Reid

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The story will be given complete in one issue.

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A tale of to-day, the action laid in New York city and vicinity. Deeply absorbing in interest, strong in character and ingenious in plot. It may well be eagerly anticipated.

Our Arm-Chair.

A Prehistoric Race—In the fine story by Oll Coomes, started in this number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, the reader is introduced to a cavern in which reposed the remains of a people coeval with the Mastodon and other long since extinct species of animals. The incident, to some readers, may seem exaggerated or wholly improbable; but it nevertheless is a very interesting adaptation of a most singular and well-established fact. Almost everywhere over our country and especially over the great Mississippi Valley Region, are evidences of the existence of a prehistoric race of people, so well advanced in the arts of civilization as to construct vast works of defensive war and fortification and to build great cities, highways, temples, etc. Year by year these evidences so multiply that now scientists are agreed upon the fact that this New World is, indeed, an old world, whose soil was once overrun by a mighty people, but who, from some incomprehensible reason, passed so utterly away that only by the most careful scrutiny can their existence be demonstrated and traced back to an age long prior to that fixed for any of the races of Adam.

As to the verity of the incident referred to, in Mr. Coomes' romance—the discovery of the vast underground burial room of this ancient people, we have a perfect parallel detailed in a local history, by Mr. Rank, of the town of Lexington, in Kentucky. He says:

"A subterranean cemetery of the original inhabitants of this place was discovered here nearly a century ago. In 1776, three years before the first permanent white settlement was made at Lexington, some venturesome hunters, most probably from Boonesborough, had their curiosity excited by the strange appearance of stones they saw in the woods where our city now stands. They removed these stones and came to others of peculiar workmanship, which, upon examination, they found had been placed there to conceal the entrance to an ancient catacomb, formed in the solid rock, fifteen feet below the surface of the earth. They discovered that a gradual descent from the opening brought them to a passage, four feet wide and seven feet high, leading into a spacious apartment, in which were numerous niches, which they were amazed to find occupied by bodies which, from their perfect state of preservation, had evidently been embalmed. For only tempers that, and, in nine cases out of ten, the tempter succeeds in carrying his pretty device, and it is this ease in carrying his assaults which makes the world so given to tempting one's vanity. So that she or he who does not yield, when others are gratifying their love of self, is doing an unusual and commendable act. To refuse to wear an expensive and very pretty hat or bonnet does require courage, as all women know.

But there is a self-denial that is heroic, in the highest sense. A girl I know earns, by the most unremitting labor, eighteen dollars a week. Eight dollars of this sum she secretly sets apart—for what? Why, to keep a beloved brother in college and to help him on in a chosen profession. She goes poorly clad, and denies herself society, position, and even necessary recreation, in her noble self-denial. What reward, think you, oh, vain girl of the world, who spends money lavishly on dress, entertainments and travel—what reward of respect and applause should that sister have? You say, "you don't know." Then I'll answer for you. She deserves the reward due to all heroic acts, and will receive it from all who appreciate what is good and great.

The child that never practices self-denial becomes a selfish man or woman as surely as a seed planted becomes a vine or a tree. Oh, how essential is it, then, for parents to inculcate the virtue in their little ones! It is one of the curses of money that it overrules or suppresses this virtue, and the result is told in many a ruined heart and soul. Better if many a family had been so poor that it had to deny its sons and daughters many a vain gratification. It would have spared these children sighs, tears and regrets.

If I have one prayer that always is upon my rosary of good precepts, it is—Teach me self-denial! EVE LAWLESS.

SOUL SLAVERY.

ral College" substitute for a popular vote for President and Vice-President. The beneficence of the Electoral College system is illustrated in the case of the death of Mr. Greeley. Had he been elected by a popular vote, a new election must have been held. It is of course, in the power of this "College" to elect any person to the presidency, even though the person so elected had not been a nominal "candidate." If General Grant had died, instead of Mr. Greeley, before the meeting of the Electoral College, it is probable that Mr. Wilson would have been chosen President, and Schuyler Colfax re-elected Vice-President. It is very safe to trust this great power to the "College," elected as it is by popular suffrage, and its members almost uniformly being the wisest and most reliable of our citizens. There are some things which it is not safe to commit to a direct vote of the people, among which must be named, President, Vice-President, Judges of Supreme Court, etc., and it undoubtedly would be far better for the country if all judges were nominated by National or State Executives (subject to the Indorsement of the National or State Senates), or elected by the State Legislatures. Our Judiciary has sensibly depreciated in character and efficiency by the popular elective system. Democracy is a good thing, but like all good things, is liable to abuse.

From a Pittsburgh correspondent we have a newspaper report of a *sorbet dansante*, which the correspondent attended. The point he makes is that several of the ladies dressed in such a style as to shock his sense of propriety, and yet these *decolleté* dresses were those especially commended and dwelt upon by the newspaper reporter. He asks what we think about it. We never are appealed to on this subject of propriety of dress that we do not instinctively recall the repartees of Tallyrand, Napoleon's Green Prime Minister. One day, at a Tuilleries State Reception, when several ladies of considerable prominence were to take an oath of fidelity to the Emperor Napoleon I, he particularly noticed the beautiful Madame de Monier, who wore remarkably short petticoats to show the delicacy of her ankles. Some one asked Tallyrand what he thought of the *tout ensemble*. "I think," said he, "that her dress is too short to take an oath of fidelity." Now, while we do not approve of the great diplomat's covert conclusion, we yet applaud the keen irony and subtle good sense of his remark, and hold that any lady who so dresses as to expose her person improperly is guilty of an impropriety that, sooner or later, she herself will condemn: and the fact that the Bohemian reporters and fast young men most laud the *decolleté* costumes, is, of itself, a "confirmation strong" of the questionable modesty and propriety of the dress.

One of Our Writers.—The *Baltimorean* thus advertises to our contributor, Mr. A. P. Morris, Jr.:

"Mr. Morris handles strong characters with a firm hand, and even when he deals with those especially bad his presentation of them is unexceptionable. Hence his stories are deservedly popular with those who demand not only what is strongly dramatic but also essentially pure and rational."

His serial, "Iron and Gold," now running through our columns, will well sustain this opinion.

SELF-DENIAL.

WHEN I promenade in the city and see the heaps and piles of good things in the windows, I am very much inclined to think that the shopkeepers (be it pardon, gentlemen; I suppose I ought to say *storekeepers*) are leading us into temptation every day of their lives. It is really dangerous to go near one of those stores with a few greenbacks in your pocket-book, for you'll have to look in the window and exclaim: "How sweet!" Then you must enter, and the result inevitably is that you are minus your greenbacks when you are once more in the street.

If I know there is something in a store, that I have "set my heart" upon, but don't feel as though I could afford to gratify my whim, I just close my eyes and walk soberly on.

There is, sometimes, real bravery in self-denial. The world is full of those who can't have just what they want; and the number of those who really deny themselves some coveted happiness, because it is best that they should do so, is very small. Human nature's weakest point is its vanity. Only tempt that, and, in nine cases out of ten, the tempter succeeds in carrying his pretty device, and it is this ease in carrying his assaults which makes the world so given to tempting one's vanity. So that she or he who does not yield, when others are gratifying their love of self, is doing an unusual and commendable act. To refuse to wear an expensive and very pretty hat or bonnet does require courage, as all women know.

But there is a self-denial that is heroic, in the highest sense. A girl I know earns, by the most unremitting labor, eighteen dollars a week. Eight dollars of this sum she secretly sets apart—for what? Why, to keep a beloved brother in college and to help him on in a chosen profession. She goes poorly clad, and denies herself society, position, and even necessary recreation, in her noble self-denial. What reward, think you, oh, vain girl of the world, who spends money lavishly on dress, entertainments and travel—what reward of respect and applause should that sister have? You say, "you don't know." Then I'll answer for you. She deserves the reward due to all heroic acts, and will receive it from all who appreciate what is good and great.

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If I have one prayer that always is upon my rosary of good precepts, it is—Teach me self-denial! EVE LAWLESS.

SOUL SLAVERY.

A WOMAN wrote to me not long ago: "Nobody knows how I hate to live in this way, and be so down—yes, that is the word, down. The world grows year by year, but I can not keep pace with it. There is nothing in my life but cooking and taking care of children. I don't blame any one, but it seems hard. Don't be surprised at my outburst—thoughts will not always stay

in one's mind. I don't let them loose very often."

I know what that meant. It was only a few lines, but it was as solemn as David's lament over Jonathan. It was the involuntary cry of an earnest woman who was in the "house of bondage" who realized that, instead of growing in soul year by year, she was standing still, who every hour feels an outstretching of soul for something beyond the fleshpots of Egypt, but who must strangle such outreaches in their birth, and, putting away the divine afflatus, be inspired with thoughts of cooking cabbage with mes pork, and the various details of baby dress-making and mending.

I knew what it meant exactly. I knew this woman before she was married, and knew that she read much, that she liked study, and loved music, and poetry, and flowers. I knew that in her present home there is hardly a newspaper, much less a book, that her husband cares nothing for reading or flowers, and has not a taste in common with her. No reading or study now, and the two sunny-haired children that call her mother, must do without the soul training which leisure and broader culture would enable her to give them, and which is the most solemn responsibility of motherhood.

Talk about a woman giving up every thing else, and contenting herself with simply being a wife and mother! There is more in being a wife and mother than some people imagine, and if well fitted to be those—especially a mother—a woman has a soul above mere cooking and eating. Being a *drudge* is not being a wife and mother. Call things by their right names. No true woman objects to laboring, but when it comes to putting away every thing else, and traveling year in and out in a rut just wide enough to contain a cupboard, wash-tub, and cradle, with so much to do to keep these things in order, that she can not get time to even peep over the edge of the rut into the world, it becomes quite a different thing. And I doubt if there ever was a woman who filled such a situation, who didn't sometimes feel an almost irresistible desire to spank the baby, and throw something—if it was only a cross-word—at her "liege lord," who, mind you, walks beside the rut, and not in it. For, though he may be all intent on his work, business calls him from home occasionally, and if he only goes to the corner grocery, he hears people talking of past, present, and possible future events, and so gets an idea or two in his head, outside of himself and his tread-mill of labor, that furnishes food for thought and keeps him from utter mental stagnation.

I wonder that so many men fail to think of these things; and one of my articles of faith is that they should be taught to think of them while boys—another work for the mother.

To go back to my correspondent, or rather her surroundings, I'd like to know why a man, if his tastes differ from those of his wife, can't indulge hers, and allow her to have them undisturbed. If he doesn't care for books, and is more absorbed in the idea of getting "comfortably well off" than in any thing the literary world may be doing, that is no excuse for him to never buy a book, or take more than one newspaper. The newest kind of potato or field corn is not of half the consequence that his wife's welfare and happiness is, and the money invested in these things would help him to be "comfortably well off" much better than if invested in Norway oats or pure-bred live stock. I can't see, either, why, because he does not care for flowers, he must always be making remarks to his wife about the foolishness of cultivating them—made, I allow, in a half-jesting way, but showing the half-contempt he feels quite as plainly as if more earnestly expressed. If he really thinks the ground occupied by flowers would be in better use if occupied by wheat or potatoes, I can not see the advantage to be gained by expressing such opinion every time the subject of flowers is considered.

Amiability. This bump on his head was materially lessened by some low bridge on the canal.

Reverence. From long use, this bump, which otherwise would have been prominent, is greatly reduced.

Honesty. As my time is rather precious, I could not afford to take the whole hour necessary to hunt out this peculiarity, if, indeed, it exists at all.

Cautiousness, stupendous. He would never risk his life by rushing recklessly into a muck where he had no business to do so, nor where he had. In a battle he would be a most intrepid soldier to lead a regiment of stragglers. As a General he would enlist a great number of men; they would flock to his standard, for they would never be in danger of getting killed.

Self-esteem. I might say this faculty only covers all his head, yet I would not like to make it out too small.

Adhesiveness, strong. He will stick to anything like a porous plaster. He was the original inventor of prepared glue. In a cheerful game of whist he is always stuck; in truth, he is always stuck up.

Firmness, very large. He is the inventor of the word. Ask him for the loan of five dollars, he would firmly say, "I haven't got it." You could never induce him to alter his mind. He will stick firm to any principle which he has, although his principles might not have the same firmness. A mite couldn't stand beside him.

Acquisitiveness, small. Had he everything in the world which he wanted, he would be perfectly contented; he would ask for nothing more.

Conscientiousness, very large. He dearly and philanthropically loves to see his neighbors get justice; he will always remember an obligation, whether he ever returns it or not. It is his conscience that troubles him; it is too large.

Alimentiveness is well expressed in the size of his test. Hunger has no charms for him, and he will destroy it at every opportunity, and between times.

Taste is well evinced in the size of his mouth.

Order, very fine. At his desk he can lay his hand on any article he wants, when he finds it. He has a place for everything, but the article is seldom at home. He is a good collector.

Human nature, prominent. Wouldn't cork up more than one of his ears at a tale against his neighbors; is fond of good clothes; believes thoroughly in himself; follows his own advice, and has an idea that his wife's husband is a first-rate fellow in general. There's a good deal of human nature about him.

Has excellent time; probably is the only man who can whistle *Yankee Doodle*, and the *Devil's Dream* at the same time, under a woodshed on a dark night. Has amazing capabilities to hold the bass drum in a brass band for another fellow to beat; great fondness for street organs no doubt caused by the enlargement of the ear.

The "elegantly-allegorical language of the day" is decidedly better calculated to point a moral than adorn a tale. Not long since the intelligent order of people were tired down for choosing their words with too glibly care, too great study of effect in smooth utterance—they were in danger of becoming too elegant in speech to prove always comprehensible to uncultivated ears. It was quite proper to cultivate grace of motion, but to describe it in like graceful terms by designating the act of locomotion as *gliding* instead of walking was a degree of affectation which our diamonds in the rough, who it is to be supposed—could not approximate to such super-refinement, were by no means willing to tolerate. Calms are followed by storms, peace by revolutions, unnatural restraints by strong revolts, effective elegance of speech—prickly chaff.

Victims of the tender passion, who fornication were credited with mellifluous phrases rippling softly over ruby lips, with shy, sweet glances reading deep into each other's souls—lovers blest, are nowadays simply a "pair of spoons."

Mustache, stirred by the spirit of adulation, murmurs rhapsodical eulogies, thinking to himself meanwhile:

"Deuced foine giwl. Cool two hundred thousand—bagged, by Jove!"

Beauty listens demurely, peeping innocently through the "fringing vail," artlessly artful, thrills ecstatically with the reflection:

"Dear Adonis! Hard hit, isn't he? So handsome and so devoted—I'll think of it."

There's a graduating scale to this popular chaff, for our social degrees are widely separated as ever in its almost universal use. From the rough who is prepared to "put a head" on his opponent to the gentleman of leisure who "cuts" his rival, from the facetious "tie a knot under his ear" of the humorous victim to the sultry "hang him" of the sulky boor, the hour-glass of chaff runs its steady course.

Tantalizing, mystifying, elusive, devious, heaped up empty measurement, inconsistent and paradoxical—chaff! Yet what a convenient commodity! Think how life's burdens might be lightened were they only to consist of chaff, but remember at the same time that "after the winnowed grain there flies the fowl," and—

"A bird that once has been snared in the toils

Is not to be caught with chaff."

J. D. B.

Foolscap Papers.

Free Knowledge-y.

At the last lecture on phrenology, I went up on the stage to get a professional opinion of my bump o' geniusness.

"Ladies and gents," said the professor, "this gentleman has a remarkable head, not so much for its length as for its thickness, the skull being in the neighborhood of an inch thick, and very firm. Charles I. would have been very proud to have been the owner of this head, about the time when he looked around and found himself *acephalous*—he would have felt much pleased with it. The owner of it himself is very proud of it."

Benevolence is represented by a very large depression in his head—he informs me this was caused by having been struck on that bump with a brick. He says he would give the last cent he ever gets to charity, and is waiting for the opportunity.

Love of life very great. He has never died. His property is worth over one hundred thousand dollars, which will be divided equally between his two daughters.

Mr. Morris. Grand emony mixed in sweet oil, and applied by rubbing on the steel with a rag will polish the revolver.

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SATURDAY JOURNAL.

CHRISTMAS.

BY CLYDE RAYMOND.

The yearly joy has come, the holiday
That wins all souls unto its sacred peace,
And bids the troubles of each life to cease,
That mirth may have its sway.

How cheerfully we put aside the cares
Which mar the common pleasures of the year,
And with glad hearts accept the welcome cheer
The festal day prepares.

Away with toil! away with grief and pain!
Let roses bloom amid the surrounding snow,
With them a token to greet them as they glow—
Let "Merry Christmas" reign!

Oh, happy hours that swiftly pass away!
When joyous friends and relatives unite
Once more to celebrate, with spirits light,
The Savior's natal day.

Turn back, unwell the past, oh, shadowy Time,
Reveal the rapt and wondering gaze of them
For whom shone out the Star of Bethlehem
With holy light sublime!

Show us again those wise men of the East,
Who, hoping and believing, onward trod,
To find the birthplace of the Son of God,
And hail him as their Priest.

Onward, still onward, following afar,
And still unmindful of all things beside
The steady light of that unswerving guide,
The clear and brilliant star.

And when that star, its mission now complete,
Came and stood over where the young child was,
They whose great minds controlled, directed
laws.

Kneel at young Jesus' feet.

And in the ages that have circled by
Since they their love and gladness told,
And gave him gifts—frankincense, myrrh and
gold—

He had been always nigh.

Been night to pardon, to redeem and love,
A bright angel Bethlehem's resplendent star,
To point to the spirit-world afar,

Oh, merry bells, ring out your Christmas chime,
This day, to Earth and Heaven alike so dear,

And let it be, of all the passing year,

The "maddest, merriest time!"

Though northern winds sweep down with angry
roar,

Or sunshine throws its charms o'er winter's pall,
May thus of love and gladness bring to all
A rich and golden store.

Oh, happy season! when young hearts beat high,
And their hope abounds every cherished dream,

As all things fair and pleasant sweetly seem
Not to fade and die.

When Hope, with changeable pinion, wings her
flight
Amid the future's gay, enchanted bower,
And charms away the fleeting, rose-tinted hours
With visions all too bright.

A Strange Girl: A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

BY ALBERT W. ATKEN,
AUTHOR OF "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE IVORY PORTRAIT.

For a little way the two walked on in silence. Lydia seemed lost in thought and Paxton watched her downcast face eagerly and earnestly.

"Well will you not speak?" he said, after a long pause.

"Suppose that there is a barrier between us?" she said, slowly; "suppose that it is impossible for me to marry you?"

"How can that be?" Sinclair asked, in astonishment, and for the first time he appeared troubled.

"There may be twenty reasons, any one of which would render our union impossible."

"Yes, there may be," he said, doubtfully, "but you do not say that there is?"

"Why force me to say cruel words? I wish to spare you pain," she said, earnestly.

"Lydia, if there is really a reason why we should not come together, you have not acted rightly in this matter," he said, gravely.

"I know it, and it is that which makes me miserable," she said, sadly. "I was so happy in your society that I was not conscious of the danger to which I was exposing both of us. It was like sailing on the stream above the rapids; one glides along unconscious of danger until the roar of the water dashing upon the breaking rocks rises upon the air, and then, fastlocked in the embrace of the tide, escape is impossible. Blame me for all that has occurred. It is all my fault. I saw that you were beginning to care for me, but—Heaven help me—I had not courage to warn you of your danger."

"Lydia, you speak in riddles. Why not tell me at once if there be any reason which prevents our marriage?"

"There is—there is!" The voice was almost a wail.

"Yes, but explain."

"Oh, it is too dreadful."

By this time the two had reached the quarry. The sun was sinking slowly behind the far-off horizon line.

"Let us climb up to the top of the rocks; we've a good hour of daylight yet," he said. "We can sit and chat for twenty or thirty minutes, and then have plenty of time to get home before dark."

Slowly they climbed to the top of the hill and sat down upon some huge rocks which dropped out of the ground.

"Come now, make me your confidant, Lydia," he said, coaxingly. "I can not bring myself to believe that there really exists any barrier between us."

"There is one," she said, sadly.

"Tell me what it is, and see how quickly I'll find a way to o'erleap it. I am not poor, Lydia, and money removes a great many barriers in this world."

"Yes, you are rich and I am poor," she answered, plucking the leaves listlessly from a little shrub which grew by the side of the rock.

"Is that the reason?" he demanded. "Because if it is, that can be easily remedied."

"No, it is not that."

"What then?"

"Suppose that I am already married?"

Lydia did not look Sinclair in the face as she put the question, but kept her eyes fixed upon the ground.

"Let me look in your eyes, Lydia," he said, quietly.

Slowly she raised her head and looked with a mournful gaze into his face.

"That is not the reason, Lydia; you are not married," he said, confidently.

"You think so?" she said, deeply agitated, and again she looked down upon the ground.

"I am sure of it. Come, your reason."

"Suppose that I had committed some great crime?"

"A great crime!"

"Yes, suppose that I was a murderer,

would you love me then?" Cold and unnatural was her voice.

"Oh, nonsense!" he cried, lightly; "you are only trying me, Lydia, but you shall find that my love is so strong that if you will only give yourself to me, I will take you almost without question."

"Oh, you do love me!" she exclaimed, and she raised her large eyes, now moist with tear-drops, to his face.

"Yes, I do; men say that I am an icicle, Lydia, but I sometimes fancy that I am a great deal more like a slumbering volcano," he said, smiling.

"Let us go home now," and she rose as she spoke.

The red glare of the setting sun came full upon the rocky summit and seemed to crown the head of the girl with a halo of light.

As Sinclair gazed upon her, he thought that he had never seen her look so lovely before.

Paxton sprang lightly down the rockledge—was some three feet descent—and turned to offer his hand to the girl.

"I can jump," she said, and she sprung from the rock, but, as she came down, her ankle twisted under her, and with a moan, ran forth by acute pain, she sunk down in a faint upon the rocks.

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the kind hostess had sent up to her, drew a chair to the window, and was looking dreamily out upon the scene, that was so different from the fairy visions around her country home.

Not now the heraldic songs of birds and dewy perfumes of the flowers; but the whirl and skurry of business, and heavy, gloomy atmospheres. Not now the beautiful landscape, with ripening fields, the velvet grass, or the cool shadow of verdurous trees; but houses, houses in endless number, smoking chimneys, cramped streets, with their hurrying throngs, and a constant murmuring of noisy airs all changed, save the still bright blue of the sky, and the play of the sunbeams.

Yet, even this monotony, with its adieu to scenes that were full of grandeur and attractiveness, was soothed in its way.

She felt as if she would wish to be buried forever there, in that silent room, and live out her unhappy life in exile.

Hugh was not in her thoughts then, as she listlessly noted the people below; but she was thinking of her father—how she could let him know of her whereabouts?—wondering whether he had found the note explanatory of her absence?—and if he was much worried?

"I can not go back there," she uttered, half-aloud; "it has cost me too great an effort to leave it—and it would make me feel worse. I am safe, almost, now, from everybody. I can not go back. But Pa must know where I am. He will go to aunt Jane's, and when he finds out that she has gone away, and that I could not have seen her, then he will be very anxious about me. I know. How shall I send him word? What shall I do?"

Some one tapped gently on her door.

"Come," said Zella.

It was the landlady—a good-natured female of middle age, with an agreeable countenance.

"Good-morning, Miss," as she advanced, into the room.

"Good-morning, Mrs. Diggis."

"I just thought I'd come up and see if there's any thing else you'd like to have, Miss. My boarders are all gone out, and—my—!—it's a relief to me, you know, for there's just some of the liveliest young larks here you ever did see, and they sometimes nigh tease me half out of my wits. But, is there any thing else I can send up to you?"

"No, I thank you, Mrs. Diggis; I had a very nice breakfast."

"Yes, Miss."

She lingered closer, evidently having something to say, and as evidently reluctant to say it.

"Won't you sit down, Mrs. Diggis?"

"Me?—no, indeed; bless you! I haven't a minute. I've to look after the sweeping and dusting, and things generally—and my—!—it's a relief to me, you know, for there's just some of the liveliest young larks here you ever did see, and they sometimes nigh tease me half out of my wits. But, is there any thing else I can send up to you?"

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great interest, joy and happiness to the sojourners at Stony Cliff. Fred Travis and Vida renewed their love vows, walked in the cool forest aisles, rowed upon the river, and talked and sung as though their young hearts had never felt the pangs of grief, nor bitterness of despair.

Nor were Ralph St. Leger and Sylveen Gray less happy in each other's society—the cheerful light of each other's eyes and the music of each other's voice.

And there were other joyous hearts besides. There were lovers in that little band of Avengers, and sweethearts were among those rescued from the Indians, and theirs was a love strengthened by long months of cruel separation, despair and suffering. If to them the night had been dark, the morning was all the more radiant.

Sylveen Gray was greatly surprised, not a little horror-stricken, when she learned that her lover was the terrible being, Death-Notch; but when she as well as the settlers had learned the cause of his vengeance, and that he was not so terrible as was reputed, they could not censure him for the course he had pursued, in wreaking retribution on the agents of his sorrow.

Ralph did not, however, tell them of the great state of semi-consciousness under which most of his terrible deeds had been performed. But, by keeping aloof from the war-path, and in the presence of his adored Sylveen, he effectually overcame that terrible passion of mad revenge which was proof of itself, that it came of no physical or mental debility, but of a highly excitable temperament that had been cultivated in his freaks, instead of being restrained.

One thing, however, stands yet to be explained in connection with Death-Notch. It will be remembered that, on the night of the storm at the solitary hut in the forest, he drew from the bosom of his hunting-shirt a flattened bullet, which had evidently been aimed at his heart by a lurking foe; and also when taken prisoner by the savages, near his own cabin, how the inhuman foe sought to torture him by shooting burning arrows into his breast, and how he bore this torture with unflinching fortitude. The whole secret of this wonderful fortitude was this: beneath his hunting-shirt he wore a steel jacket, made something like the coat of mail worn by the warriors of the Middle Ages. This jacket had once been his father's; the latter had once been a member of a secret organization in the south, and the steel jacket and iron mask worn by Ralph, and to which his life was owing on more than one occasion, were a part of the regalia worn by that secret order.

Thus the mysteries connected with Death-Notch stand explained, which were no mysteries after all.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THREE YEARS AFTER.

It was yet early morning, when a band of eight persons, habited as hunters, stood beneath the unbraided shadows of a great forest oak.

They were all young men, yet the faces of some were overgrown with heavy beards, and others were just "sporting" their first mustache, and one of them was beardless and bronzed, but he was an Indian.

These men were the bone and muscle, if you will accept the term, of the flourishing little settlement of Fairview. They were away from home then on a few days' hunt, enjoying a holiday from the field and plow.

We have met with these persons before, dear reader, yet we can scarcely recognize in those stern, bearded, manly faces, the once almost boyish features of the Silver Lake Avengers. But it has only required three years to effect this change, for they were just emerging into manhood when we first saw them upon the trail of the red-man.

But, three years have wrought wonderful changes in the lives of these young men, and as they now stand there in the great forest under the oak, ready to take up their homeward march, one of their number suddenly exclaims:

"By George, boys! don't you remember this very spot and this very tree?"

All gaze around them, and a light of recognition beams in every eye.

"Yes," says Fred Travis, "it is the very tree under which I called the roll of the Lake Avengers three years ago."

"There ye are, 'Squire Travis, and right here we stood when we heard, for the first time, the cry of one our Death-Notch's victims," says Phelix O'Ray.

"What changes time has brought to us all," replies Travis; "it seems impossible that, after three years of constant dangers almost, we are all permitted to meet here together again. It is—"

The sentence was broken abruptly off by the crack of a rifle ringing suddenly and sharply through the woods.

The young hunters gazed inquiringly from one to the other. It brought up recollections of the morning when they stood on that very spot and heard the report of Death-Notch's rifle and the wail of his victim.

"Ah, there is some one besides ourselves in these woods," said Amos Meredith; "I hope Death-Notch has not returned out again."

"It must be some hunter," said Dick Carter.

He had scarcely uttered the words when there suddenly broke upon their ears the voice of some one singing, in a lively air, the words:

"The possum he grinned at the ole hedgehog,
At the ole hedgehog, the ole hedgehog;
The possum he grinned at the ole hedgehog,
Way down by the Squamton—"

"Old Shadow, as I live!" burst in joyous accents from Fred Travis' lips, as the old hunter emerged from the woods before them.

"Bless my ole eyes!" the hunter exclaimed, regarding our friends with surprise; "who'd a-thought it! Here I find ye, lads, after three years separtshun."

"Yes, yes; here we are, Shadow! Give us your hand, old friend, and tell us where you've been and how time uses you."

"Oh, I've been rompin' around over this little patch o' earth, not a leetle, huntin', scapin', and such like. But, lads, time's beginnin' to plow up my face like fury, and I can't knock a Inglin double as easy as I used to, still I ain't worn out yet. But, I got to thinkin' over ole times and concluded to run down to Stony Cliff. That they told me the eight Avengers had started a new settlement called Fairview, so I thought I'd run over and see you."

"Glad, very glad to see you, Shadow. You must go to the settlement with us. The women-folks will be very happy to see you, too," said Travis.

"Wal, I'll go down and see how yer git-

ting along; but what's the lad ye called Death-Notch?"

"We left him at Fairview to look after things while we were absent. But let us be off."

The party hastened to where their horses were bridled and packed all ready for starting, and Omaha having resigned his animal to the old hunter, they set off for home.

It was nearly sunset when they hove in sight of a number of neat-looking log cabins nestled down in a little valley that was teeming with industry and enterprise.

"Whew!" ejaculated Old Shadow, "what's that?"

"Fairview," replied Fred.

"The deuce! wheu, but ye've got a little Paradise o' yer own. Jist look at the corn-fields and the herds o' stock! Who'd a' dreamt it, ten years ago? Ah, me! it tells me that time is hoofin' it on, and life with me is drawing to a close."

"So it is with all of us, old friend, and you may live many long, happy years yet," said Fred.

"Yes, yes, Travis," replied the old hunter; "but I pose ye fellers are all married, ain't ye?"

"All but Omaha, Phelix O'Ray and David Hawes. You see that cabin to the right of the group? That is where Amos Meredith lives with his wife. The one next to it is where Ralph St. Leger lives with his wife and baby."

"Baby?" exclaimed the old hunter, and his eyes sparkled with a childlike joy. "God bless the little critters! I allers loved 'em, and it's been menny a long day since I dandled one on my knee. But who lives in this little cottage down before us here, with the vine-kiwered porch, and—"

"That is my house," replied Fred, "and there comes Vida, my wife, to meet us."

"Ther nation! Then ye married that leetle angel? Oh, Travis, what a happy soul ya must be; but what?" he asked, shading his eyes with his open palm from the setting sun, "what is that she has got in her arms?"

Fred smiled and replied:

"It is our baby boy."

"Salvation!" exclaimed the old hunter. "Heaven is a leetle partial with its gifts, but God's will be done."

The party rode into the settlement and dismounted. Old Shadow was received with the greatest joy, and each with the other to make him comfortable and happy.

The old fellow never left Fairview. Its good people prevailed on him to spend the remainder of his days there, and he accepted their kind offer. He was the happiest man in the settlement, too, for by those little ones that he loved so dearly, he was known only as 'grandpa.'

Omaha ever remained a friend to the whites, and as "Josh, the Friendly," he stands forward in the history of Iowa as one of the truest friends of the white settler.

I have only to add that the name and deeds of Death-Notch are still remembered in the North-west; and there are those who can still point out to you, trees that once bore the *Death-Notch*, the totem of the young Scalp-Hunter.

THE END.

Mohenoesto:

OR,

Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY,
(MAJOR MAX MARTINE.)

XIX.—*Wonderful Canyon—Scenes of Picturesque Beauty—Down the Canyon—Geological Changes—What Nature Does—A Prophecy—Albuquerque—Ancient Tools—How Yankees Die—Mineral Treasures—The Rabbit Hills—A Jolly Priest—A Mexican Idea of Heaven—The Social Atmosphere—Ignorance of the Priests—Marriage Fees—Mexican Women—Refreshments—Those which Steal the Brains away—Wine in, Wit out—Gambling as High Art—The Curse of Catholicism—Santa Fe.*

To the westward of the Ojo del Muerto we came upon an immense canyon, or rent in the earth. None of us were aware of its existence until we were immediately on its brink, when a spectacle, exceeding in grandeur anything I had ever seen before, came suddenly in view. Our journey all along had been full of interest, and on the previous day, we had had great difficulty in crossing a much smaller chasm, which lay in our way. Not a tree or bush, no outline whatever, marked its position or course, and we were lost in amazement as we rode up to the verge of the abyss.

Its depth could not have been less than eight hundred or a thousand feet, and from three to five hundred yards in width; and, at the point where we first struck it, the sides were nearly perpendicular. A sensation of dizziness was felt by all as we looked down, as it were, into the bowels of the earth. Below, an occasional spot of green relieved the eye, and a small stream of water, now rising to the view, then sinking beneath some huge rock, went foaming and bubbling along. Immense walls, columns, and in some places what appeared to be arches, were seen standing, worn by the water, undoubtedly, but so perfect in form that it was difficult to believe they had not been formed by the hand of man. The rains of many centuries, falling upon an immense prairie, had here found a reservoir, and their workings on the different veins of earth and stone, had formed these strange and fanciful shapes. Before reaching the chasm, we had crossed numerous large trails, leading a little more to the west than we were traveling, and we were convinced that they all centered at a common crossing near by. In this we were not disappointed, for we soon came into a large road, which millions of Indians, buffaloes, and mustangs, had traveled for years. The descent looked perilous enough, but we knew there was no other near. The mustangs which we rode went down well enough, while the more stubborn pack-mules brought up the rear.

Once in the narrow path which wound down the steep descent, there was no turning back, and we finally reached the bottom of the canyon in safety. The large stones loosened in the descent would go leaping and thundering down and strike at the bottom, with a crash. Arriving at the bottom, we found a running stream of pure cold water, and on the opposite side a romantic dell, covered with short grass and a few cottonwoods.

The remains of a camp-fire, and the numerous tracks, showed that we were close upon the heels of a party of Indians. They, too, had stopped here to give their horses an opportunity to graze and rest them-

selves. The trail on the west side was discovered, winding up the steep and rugged sides of the precipice.

As we journeyed along this dell, we were struck with admiration at the strange and fanciful figures made by the washing of the waters during the rainy season. In some places, perfect walls, formed of a reddish clay, were seen standing, and had they been anywhere else, it would have been impossible that other than the hand of man had formed them. The vein of which these walls was composed, was of even thickness, very hard, and ran perpendicular; and when the softer sand which surrounded them was washed away, the vein still remained standing upright, in some places one hundred feet high, and three or four hundred in length. There were columns, too, and such was their architectural order, and so much of chaste grandeur was there about them, that we were often lost in wonder and admiration.

In other places, the breastworks of forts were plainly visible; then again the frowning turrets of some castle of the olden time. Cumbric pillars of some mighty pile, raised to religion or royalty, were scattered about; regularity was strangely mixed up with ruin and disorder, and nature had done it all.

Niagara has been considered one of the grandest scenes in nature, but Niagara sinks into insignificance when compared with the wild grandeur of this stupendous chasm. In imagination we were carried back to Thebes, to Palmyra, and to ancient Athens, and we could not help thinking we were among the ruins of those magnificent cities of old.

Our passage out of this place was effected only by the greatest difficulty, but, however, in safety. Again on the level prairie, we looked back, and after proceeding a few hundred yards, not a sign of the immense chasm was visible. We were then on a plain at least two hundred and fifty miles in width, and this chasm seems to be a reservoir or conductor for the immense quantity of rain which falls upon it during the wet season. The prairie is undoubtedly the largest in the world, and the canyon is in fit keeping with the plain.

On the plains of Colorado are to be found many of the immense chasms, or river canyons, where a deep and rapid stream will be found running for miles, and then suddenly disappearing in the bowels of the earth. Falls, excelling in stupendous grandeur, the Falls of Niagara, are to be found in Wyoming, and I predict that the day is not far distant when thousands will visit them as they now do Niagara, and the latter will be considered a second-class show.

Passing Albuquerque, we proceeded westward through the Zuni Pass of the Zuni Mountains, and thence to the principal village of the Moquis Indians, among the Rabbit Hills. Albuquerque has a population of nearly four thousand, and is one of the richest and pleasantest towns in the territory, with a splendid cathedral and other buildings more than two hundred years old. At the farms along the road, farmers were treading out their wheat with horses and oxen, precisely as did the children of Israel three thousand years ago, but with an utter disregard for the injunction of the old patriarch who said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, which treadeth out the corn." Some were cutting corn with a rude instrument resembling the hoe in use on the sugar plantations of Cuba, and mowing grass with sickles. The greater the antiquity of the implements, the better they suit the Mexicans; his farming tools have not improved since the days of his Aztec forefathers. The same crooked stick serves for a plow everywhere. Merchants have tried to introduce plows, but could not persuade the natives to adopt them. Threshing machines were also taken to the country, but the farmers believed them to be some infernal machine for cheating them out of their share of the grain, and would not use them.

Traces of old Jesuit Missions abound throughout New Mexico, Arizona, Old Mexico, and Central America. These vast regions were converted to the Roman faith by patient, life-long labors of the Society of Jesus; not by the furious zeal of Cortez and his fellow-robbers, who harled the native idols down the steps of their temples, to replace them with the cross. New Mexico is thoroughly Roman Catholic, but has one Protestant school and one Protestant church.

We met with no adventures worthy of note on our journey here with, the exception of an occasional skirmish with "greasers," "yaller-bellies," and Indians.

The native Mexican, wherever he may be, is pre-eminently social. If an American can enter a saloon where he is drinking, with endless bows he insists that the newcomer shall taste from his glass, and usually treats all he can see, whether he has any money to pay or not. If another Mexican enters, he even takes the cigar from his mouth and hands it to his friend, who, after a few whiffs, passes it to a neighbor; and it usually makes the round of some old Spanish love song, not sung to the tune of *Te Deum Laudamus*. He offered to call up some of his girls and have a dance, claiming that he had the prettiest *nasas* in all Mexico; but we declined, and along in the hours when it is supposed, that ghosts and goblins stalk abroad, we bade our host good-night. We caught a glimpse of him as we were passing the window, dancing around the room with a bottle hugged tight to his breast, and singing at the top of his voice the *Te Deum*.

Right or wrong, old Father Francis put himself outside of so much *quiddity* that he got very jolly, and would break out in the strains of some old Spanish love song, not sung to the tune of *Te Deum Laudamus*. He offered to call up some of his girls and have a dance, claiming that he had the prettiest *nasas* in all Mexico; but we declined, and along in the hours when it is supposed, that ghosts and goblins stalk abroad, we bade our host good-night. We caught a glimpse of him as we were passing the window, dancing around the room with a bottle hugged tight to his breast, and singing at the top of his voice the *Te Deum*.

New Mexico must ultimately become the vineyard of America. The large and delicious El Paso grape grows in great abundance. For a penny one is allowed to enter any vineyard and eat his fill. The native wine, though a little heavy, is very rich and sparkling. The author of "Beyond the Mississippi" says: "I do not covet my Mexican neighbor's house, nor his wife, his man-servant nor his maid-servant, his horse nor his ass; but I confess to a strong desire of envy that he can enjoy the year's vintage of El Paso."

Although the women of Mexico can not boast of much superfluous virtue, yet in some respects our American women would do well to take pattern from them. I must confess I like rather the style of the dark-eyed señoritas. There is very little of the affection of the American fine lady about them. They are nothing more or less than women; and, better still, woman as she comes from her Creator's hands, with eyes, teeth, hair and figures—and for that matter, hearts too, occasionally—found upon the very best models—nature's own. In a word, they are women unstayed, and unpaded, who have gained nothing from conventionalism, and have grown up to their full estate in blissful ignorance of miliners' modes.

In South-western Mexico we found very few white men, but among those met there were none, who left a more agreeable impression than the Catholic priest who had charge of the spiritual affairs of the Moquis and Mojave Indians. The priests are usually very ignorant. Nearly all of them are "fathers of a family," whose children bear the mother's name, though their paternity

is neither concealed nor denied. The marriage fees of the priests range from ten to one hundred dollars. Among the poor, burial costs from one dollar to one hundred, according to the distance of the grave from the altar. The wealthy are sometimes charged a thousand dollars for interment in sacred earth.

"The personal names of these devout Catholics startle Protestant ears. Once dirty, cut-throat-looking Mexican bears the appellation, *Juan de Dios*—John of God—and received an invitation to a *baile* at the house of *Don Jesus Vizca*, Jesus (pronounced *He-soos*) is very common; one native name Taos is called *Jesus Christo*.

"Degenerate descendants of that strange race, whose gorgeous semi-civilization was once the world's wonder, modern Mexicans are treacherous, effeminate, cowardly and superstitious, almost meriting John Randolph's bitter invective: 'A blanketed nation of thieves and harlots.'

But our priest was of altogether a different class; one of the laugh-and-grow-fat kind, who never trouble themselves very much about the affairs of either this world or the world to come. He invited us to make him a visit at his house, which invitation we accepted in the season; more out of curiosity, I must confess, than from any other cause; for I was at a loss to know how a priest could entertain a trio of wild young men like us.

The houses of the priest was of adobe, two stories high, and showing more than ordinary taste in its architecture. The lower story was occupied by the domestics; who were principally young Indian girls; and there were plenty of them there.

When we called we were shown to a splendidly-furnished apartment, and very soon the old padre made his appearance.

He was clad in a very rich dressing-gown, black pants and slippers, and his linen was spotlessly white; but he was smoking an old pipe that looked as if it might have been his constant companion for half a century.

The conversation at first was rather desultory; the priest was merely trying to discover the

BY A MONEY-CHANGER'S WINDOW.

A Broadway Incident.

BY LAUNCE POYNTE.

By a money-changer's window stood a poor girl in a niche, Deaf to the sound of passing feet, Gazing and dreaming a vision sweet, "If she were only rich!"

Alone in the crowd of Broadway, the weather bitterly cold, Only a pane of plate-glass clear, Faced in the wealth that looked so near, Crisp notes and shining gold.

Close to the great bank portal, where, all the livelong day, People were hurrying past without end, Carrying money to hoard or spend, She stood by the passageway—

Dreaming of what she might do, wisely eyeing the gold; Then, in a moment, she thought of the way Worn and lone she must go that day, Silvering, hungry and cold.

All in a moment remembered wishing would buy no bread.

A waif cast up by the city's stream, She bitterly sighed, "Twas only a dream, Would God we all were dead!

"Up in our garret mother sews for a pittance small, Brother and I must work together, Gird of a job in the bitter cold weather, Keeps the house for all.

"At night we strive to slumber, hunger and cold to fit us, Stinted of food from day to day, Fearing to-morrow, and waiting for pay, That is held back yet!

"Oh, for a warm, bright fire! Oh, for one cheerful meal! Shoes to cover the little bare feet, That patter over the frozen street, Never more cold to feel.

"Then, 'tis well for the poor life's short, 'tis well there's a promise given! For charity grows so very small, That the only hope we've left at all, Is rest at last in heaven."

She turned from the tempting window, she goes on singing sigh, Then off to tell her kind, pitiful soul, God send her one kind, pitying soul In the holy Christmas night!

How She Went Home.
A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

A wild, bitter night of wind and storm. The snow beat in fitful gusts against the windows of the old church, through which the light shone in a soft radiance, a little way out into the night. The wind whirled and eddied among the leafless trees, and sighed about the steeple where the bell hung, waiting silently for the ringer's hand on Christmas morning.

Within all was gayety and gladness. Young men and women were busy fashioning long sprigs of pine and sprays of feathery hemlock into crosses, and wreaths, and trailing festoons, along the arches and the galleries, and across the glittering organ-pipes. Now and then they braided in a cluster of scarlet hollyberries, or white dogwood, to relieve the somberness of the evergreens; and I think, as their hands met in weaving the Christmas garlands, some sweet hopes and fancies were woven into their lives, to brighten them up, not for a brief Christmas-time only, but for all time.

A young man and a young woman were sitting on the chancel-steps, with a heap of odorous pine and gleaming berries of the scarlet holly before them, from which they were deftly weaving a motto for the arch above the altar. He formed the tassels of the pine into long braids, and she sewed them upon a background of white, putting in, here and there, an illumination from the holy heap before her.

She had a sweet, pale face. It was not beautiful, perhaps, but it was something better—it was brave, and true, and womanly. The light from the altar-lamp fell over her yellow hair, and made it gleam like gold. Once, when she lifted her eyes to the arch above them, Cyril Dane thought of pictures he had seen of the Madonna.

Cyril Dane's face was fair enough, but it lacked the purity of Agnes Casilear's. Looking in it, you would have surmised that his life had not always been so full of good impulses as on this Christmas Eve, when love was stirring his soul to new depths of tenderness, and making him resolve to be a better man in future, for the sake of the woman he loved, than he had been in the past for his own sake.

That Agnes Casilear loved him you could have told by her shy glance, and the soft, glad light of peace which brooded in her face. She loved him, and the old world seemed far off; her new world was full of rest and deep content.

Letter by letter the legend grew beneath their fingers:

"Peace on Earth; Good-will to Men."

Close by one of the windows a woman shivered in the storm. A woman clad in thin and drugged garments, with a wild, wan, woful look upon her face, as the light streamed out upon it through the narrow panes a look pitiful to see on this Christmas night, or on any night. Her long hair streamed about her face, in the fierce fury of the wind, and she shuddered and caught her breath with a quick gasp, as a fresh gust tore around the corner of the church, and eddied the white snow into her blinded eyes.

She pressed her faded face to the panes, and looked in. She saw the wreaths grow into shape and beauty beneath swift and nimble fingers, and crosses and festoons fashioned by skillful hands, from the odorous heaps of greenery. By and by, her eyes wandered away toward the altar, and she saw the two sitting there together, at work on the grand old legend of the birth-night of our Savior, sung hundreds of years ago on the Judean plains, when angels told the world of the great gladness which the night had brought to them.

The woman started when she saw the man's face, and pressed her hand upon her heart, as if to still its tumult.

"Peace on Earth," she read. "As if there could be such a thing as 'peace'!" she cried, bitterly, her eyes full of pitiful wildness. "It's always peace! peace! that they preach to us; but there's no peace! If there is, I have not found it, and I never shall! Perhaps I don't deserve it. I don't know what ails me to-night. I feel just like getting away somewhere by myself, in the night and the storm, and loathing myself to death. I wonder if it's because it's Christmas night? I used to be glad when Christmas came, but now it doesn't make any difference to me what the night or the day

is. They're all alike, all alike! I wonder if it isn't better to be dead, when one gets to hate herself?"

She put her face to the pane again, and drew her thin covering closer about her shoulders.

"He doesn't seem to think of bitter things," she said, with cold lips. "He has n't any ugly memories to trouble him. Men never have! It's only us women! I dare say he doesn't think of any one but that girl at his side. By his looks I judge he thinks there is but one woman in the world, and she is his. I wonder how long will care for her? A month, probably; two or three of them, like enough; then a prettier face comes along, and good-by to the old one! Oh, dear, dear! It's a bitter world! A bitter, cruel, cold world! I've known hearts that were colder than this storm is, though!"

The young man wove in the last tassel of pine, and the young woman fastened in the last cluster of hollyberries, and the motto was complete. The woman outside, looking in, saw him bend down suddenly, and kiss her. A warm wave of color surged over the fair face, and the clear, pure eyes wavered, and hid themselves shyly beneath their long lashes; then lifted themselves suddenly to his face in a look of perfect trust, and a woman's unquestioning love and confidence.

"She has got a sweet face," muttered the woman, "and she lets it tell how much she loves him. I'm sorry, sorry, for he isn't worthy a pure woman's love. It's a queer world, isn't it?" she asked, suddenly, of some invisible companion—some sprite of the storm, like enough—"an awful queer world!" That man has kissed me, and told me that he loved me—me, a poor creature that a pure woman, like that one in there, wouldn't touch for fear of contamination, and yet she loves him. Her soul's white as this snow is, I know, and his soul has got stains on it, but she can't see them. If she could, maybe she wouldn't be afraid of their staining her soul, because she loves

"Can't I help you?" said the other, pleadingly. "I would be so glad to, if I could."

"No, no!" cried the sobbing woman. "I wish you could, but you can't. I'm past help. I'm thankful for your kindness, all the same. You're an angel. If some one like you had spoken to me years ago as you have to-night I might have been a different woman. But it's too late now. Hark! they're calling you."

"I'm so sorry I can't help you," the young woman said. "But, if I can't, God can. You are shivering with cold. Take this shawl. I have another inside, and the sleighs will take us home so quickly that I shall not dream of being cold. I wish I could help you!" longingly.

"But you can't," was the reply, as the woman drew the soft folds of the shawl closer about her shivering form.

"Oh, but somebody must!" the other cried. "I don't believe there is anybody in the world that somebody doesn't care for!"

"You don't know!" cried the woman at the window. "You ain't used to the world, and I am. You think, because you're so happy, everybody else ought to be. But they ain't. I wish I was dead!"

"Don't talk so, please," the other said, smiling at the idea. "Are you in trouble? Perhaps I can help you. Let me try."

"Go away!" cried the woman. "Don't touch me! You don't know what a sinful thing I am. Women, not half so good and pure as you are, go by on the other side, for fear of soiling themselves by touching me with their garments. You shrink! I thought you would, when you knew what you were talking to."

"You are a woman," was the answer, in a tone of infinite pity. "Let me help you if I can. Trust me, please."

She put her hand gently on the woman's arm.

"Are you an angel?" asked the poor creature, in an awed voice. "You ain't afraid to touch me, for all I'm so soiled with sin. Oh, dear! dear!" breaking down suddenly in a bitter burst of weeping.

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such a restless spell on me that I couldn't stay anywhere, and I wandered off out here. I did have hard and bitter thoughts against you, because you left me, but I've thought it over, and I know I was more to blame than you were. I've seen her to-night, the woman you're going to marry, and if ever angels dwell on earth, she's one. Why!—she kissed me! Me! Do you hear that? And she knew what I was when she did it. Bless her! But I won't keep you here. I wanted to tell you that I'm going away, and I'll never trouble you again. For her sake, be a better man than you have been. If any thing can make you a good, true man, her love will do it. They are calling you!"

She thrust him from her, and glided into the shadow again till the sleigh drove off.

When the sound of the sleigh-bells died upon the air, she wrapped her shawl about her and struck off into the storm and night. She was thinking so busily that she knew not where she was going. Perhaps she did not care.

On and on she wandered. The snow came down about her like a cloud. It lay before her, white and yielding to her tread. She struggled through the drifts, where the wind had piled it up like banks of frost. The wind buffeted her and beat her back. She sat down for a moment and rested; then up and on again.

"I'm very tired," she said, at last. "It's a long way home. But an angel kissed me!"

Her mind was wandering, like herself.

"Dear, dear!" she said, by and by. "It's such a long, long way home. I wonder how much further? I'm tired, and the wind blows so!"

Still she kept on, staggering now and then, and almost falling. By and by a light glimmered through the darkness.

"I'm almost home!" she cried, reeling in the eddying wind. "Almost home! I see the light in the window. I'm glad, for it's cold, awful cold. But an angel kissed me!"

She sank down in a great white drift, and a drowsiness came over her. She did not try to struggle on.

"It's good to get home," she whispered, faintly. "I wonder who showed me the way? Oh—that angel! She talked with me, she kissed me!—she kissed me! and I'm such a sinful thing!"

After that she was quite still. She did not struggle nor speak. The white snow came down about her and wrapped her in its purity. And when the Christmas morning dawned, peacefully and clear after a night of storm and darkness, she had got home.

Let us trust that it was the happiest Christmas she had known in many years. So long a wanderer, the welcome home must have been strangely sweet to her—and she had wandered so far, so far! God pity her!

I think He did.

Forecastle Yarns.

BY C. D. CLARK.

X.—JIM BAGLEY'S GHOST.



BY A MONEY-CHANGER'S WINDOW.

him so. Love's a queer thing. This world is full of queer things. I can't understand it, somewhat."

This poor creature, who couldn't understand the world, looked in again through the window. They were getting ready to fasten the motto in its place above the altar. The woman with the white soul had disappeared.

"Perhaps he wasn't so much to blame for what happened as I was, after all," the woman went on, in a slow, drowsy way. "I hadn't any right to expect that he would care for a poor, miserable creature like me, after a little. I haven't any right to love! I oughtn't to think of such a thing, but I did! he'd care for me, and give me a home. I might have known better. I wonder how you could have been fool enough to think of such a thing, Jane Brent?"

She shivered again, and caught her breath in a gasping way, as if the wind strangled her.

A form came around the corner of the church, and ran against the woman at the window, before either of them was aware of the other's presence.

"Who are you?" cried the woman, suddenly, turning about, and facing the other. "I wasn't aware that any one was here," was the reply. "I was going out to my mother's grave, just at the corner of the yard there, to put this little bunch of pine and hollyberries in it, that she might know we keep her memory green, and the storm blinded me."

"It's you, is it?" the other asked, hoarsely. "I've been watching you through the window. I saw him kiss you. You love him, don't you?"

In the light coming faintly through the frosty pane the woman who asked the question could see a soft light steal into the woman's face, making it tender and sweet.

"Yes, I love him," she answered, as if to herself. "Dear Cyril!" Then, as she suddenly recollected herself, she added: "Don't mind me, please. I'm so happy to-night that I don't know just what I'm saying, I think. You look cold. Are you?"

"I'm not very warm," the woman answered. "But it don't make much difference. Nobody cares for me!"

"God take care of you, then, and give you a happier Christmas than you have known for many a year." The young woman bent and kissed the other's face, suddenly, and a tear fell from her eyes upon it. Then she turned away, and the woman was alone.

"She kissed me!" she cried. "She is an angel, and an angel kissed me!"

Presently the melody of the organ's voice came floating out upon the wind. They were rehearsing an anthem for the morrow. Then a voice—she, listening, knew whose it was, because it was so sweet, so pure—sang a verse of some old hymn in commemoration of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

"I have heard an angel sing," the woman whispered over, in a kind of rapt way. "I have talked with an angel, and an angel kissed me!"

There was the sound of merry bells at the door, and she saw them getting ready to go home.

"If I could see him for a moment!" she said, eagerly. "Maybe I can. I'll slip around to the door and hide in the shadows till they come out."

She glided away through the storm. Presently the young people came out of the church, laughing and talking in great glee. They had no remorseful thoughts to haunt them this Christmas night, thought the woman in the shadows.

Her angel came last, leaning on her lover's arm. She was quiet and thoughtful, the woman saw. Was she thinking of her, wondered?

"I sha'n't get a chance to speak to him," she thought, as they passed her. She saw him help her into the sleigh, and tuck in the warm afghans about her with tender solicitude.

"I've left my gloves," he cried, just as they were about to drive off. "Wait a moment. I can find them without a light, I think."

He ran up the steps, and opened the door. The woman glided in after him.

"Cyril," she cried, catching him by the arm.

He started.

"You here?" he cried.

"Yes," she answered. "You didn't think to see me here, did you? Somehow I got

out one day, and he went to sleep as usual, and that made the old man mad, and he went out with a rope's end and basted that lazy cuus off it was blue as indigo. That night, when I was goin' below to bunk in, I found him settin' on his chist, blubbering like a young calf.

"I'll make a hole in the water if he lick me ag'in, Jack," he said.

"You ain't got the pluck," I told him. "Why, you blamed time juice, you will git lammed twice a day through the run, now that the old man caught you shirkin'. No officer is going to stand that."

"He won't lick me but once more, and I'll haun' him till the ship goes down," said Jim, shaking his head. I didn't think he meant any thing, but the next night, when it was his watch on deck, he went to sleep ag'in, and the mate basted him good. I was at the wheel, half an hour later, when I heard a splash in the water and a gurgling

sound. We were running twelve knots, with a fresh wind blowing, but we have the ship to and called all hands, and come to look, Jim was missing. He had done just what he said he would, and though we sent out boats, we could not find him.

"There was no peace on the ship after that, I tell you, for Jim kept his word. He haunted that ship by night, generally 'bout the time I see him I was standing at the wheel, when I felt a cold touch on my face, and looked, and by the light of the binnacle-lamp I see'd the face of Jim Bagley, just as it looked in life, only awful pale. I let goa yell that you could have heard two miles, and if my mate had not grabbed the wheel the ship would have broached to, certain. The officers laughed at me when I said I had seen Jim, and had a search made; but, what was the use? They couldn't find hide nor hair of him, anywhere.

"The men began to git scared. It was as much as any one could do to git a man into the hold now, for they thought Jim Bagley had a spite on them, and would do 'em some harm. The next night when the mate had had a sort